

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 3, 7, and 14-17 and amend Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 11, 12, and 18 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine for digging a trench under a structure comprising:

11 13
a frame for operable connection to a transport machine, wherein the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes; and

a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench, wherein the frame is connected to the transport machine such that a center-line of the digging implement is capable of being laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding planes, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure; and

an attachment plate carried by the transport machine and capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine wherein said attachment plate is oriented at a permanently fixed angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly at a fixed position.

2. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an attachment plate carried by the transport machine and~~ wherein said attachment plate is capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine at a plurality of predetermined positions such that the center-line of said digging implement carried by said frame is adjustable with respect to the lengthwise extending axis of the transport machine by connecting the frame to the transport machine at different predetermined positions.

~~3. (Cancelled) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 2, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly.~~

4. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine ~~according to Claim 3~~ for digging a trench under a structure comprising:

a frame for operable connection to a transport machine, wherein the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes;

a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench, wherein the frame is connected to the transport machine such that a center-line of the digging implement is capable of being laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding planes, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure; and

an attachment plate carried by the transport machine and capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine at a plurality of predetermined positions such that the center-line of said digging implement carried by said frame is adjustable with respect to the lengthwise extending axis of the transport machine by connecting the frame to the transport machine at different predetermined positions, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly and wherein said frame comprises a pair of widthwise extending rails and at least one strut extending between said pair of rails, and wherein said attachment plate is connected to said at least one strut of said frame.

5. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 4, wherein said at least one strut of said frame also extends at substantially the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate.

6. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 5 wherein said frame is configured to extend between a first face comprised of said pair of rails and said at least one strut that is oriented at substantially the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate and an opposed second face having a substantially vertical orientation and to which said digging implement is connected.

7. (Cancelled) ~~A trench-digging machine comprising:~~

~~an attachment plate for operable connection to a transport machine which defines a vertical axis, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly;~~
~~a frame connected to said attachment plate; and~~
~~a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench.~~

8. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine ~~according to Claim 7~~ comprising:
an attachment plate for operable connection to a transport machine which defines a vertical axis, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly;

a frame connected to said attachment plate; and
a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench,

wherein said frame is configured to extend between a first face connected to said attachment plate and oriented at substantially the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate and an opposed second face having a substantially vertical orientation and to which said digging implement is connected.

9. (Original) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 8, wherein the first face of said frame comprises a pair of widthwise extending rails and at least one strut extending between said pair of rails, and wherein said attachment plate is connected to said at least one strut of said frame.

10. (This Claim number was omitted in the original application.).

11. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 9, wherein said at least one strut of said frame also extends at substantially the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate.

12. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 7 & wherein the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes, and wherein said frame is connected to the transport machine such that a

center-line of the digging implement is capable of being laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding plane, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure.

13. (Original) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 12 wherein said attachment plate is capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine at a plurality of predetermined positions such that the center-line of said digging implement carried by said frame is adjustable with respect to the lengthwise extending axis of the transport machine by connecting the frame to the transport machine at different predetermined positions.

14. (Cancelled) ~~A trench-digging machine for digging a trench under a structure comprising:~~

~~—— a frame for operable connection to a transport machine, wherein the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes;~~

~~an attachment plate carried by the transport machine and capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine at a plurality of predetermined positions; and ——~~

~~—— a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench,~~

~~—— wherein said attachment plate permits a center line of said digging implement carried by said frame to be adjustable with respect to the lengthwise extending axis of the transport machine by connecting the frame to the transport machine at different predetermined positions, and wherein said frame and said attachment plate are capable of being connected in at least one predetermined position such that the center line of the digging implement is laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding plane, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure.~~

15. (Cancelled) ~~A trench-digging machine according to Claim 14, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly.~~

~~16. (Cancelled) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 15, wherein said frame comprises a pair of widthwise extending rails and at least one strut extending between said pair of rails, and wherein said attachment plate is connected to said at least one strut of said frame.~~

~~17. (Cancelled) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 16 wherein said frame is configured to extend between a first face comprised of said pair of rails and said at least one strut that is oriented at the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate and an opposed second face having a vertical orientation and to which said digging implement is connected.~~

18. (Currently Amended) A trench-digging machine comprising:
an attachment plate for operable connection to a transport machine which defines a vertical axis, wherein said attachment plate is oriented at an angle offset from vertical such that said attachment plate faces downwardly;

a frame comprising a pair of widthwise extending rails and at least one strut extending between said pair of rails, said frame configured to extend between a first face, comprising said pair of rails and said at least one strut, that is connected to said attachment plate and oriented at substantially the same angle offset from vertical as said attachment plate and an opposed second face having a substantially vertical orientation; and

a digging implement connected to the second face of said frame for digging the trench.

19. (Original) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 18 wherein the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes, and wherein said frame is connected to the transport machine such that a center-line of the digging implement is capable of being laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding plane, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure.

20. (Original) A trench-digging machine according to Claim 19 wherein said attachment plate is capable of connecting said frame to the transport machine at a plurality of predetermined positions such that the center-line of said digging implement carried by said frame is adjustable

AB with respect to the lengthwise extending axis of the transport machine by connecting the frame to the transport machine at different predetermined positions.

Please add Claim 21 as follows:

21. A trench-digging machine for digging a trench under a structure comprising:
a frame for operable connection to a transport machine, wherein said frame comprises a pair of widthwise extending rails and at least one strut extending between said pair of rails and the transport machine defines a lengthwise extending axis and extends widthwise between a pair of lateral bounding planes; and
a digging implement connected to the frame for digging the trench,
wherein the frame is connected to the transport machine such that a center-line of the digging implement is capable of being laterally offset from the lengthwise extending axis to a position beyond the respective lateral bounding planes, thereby permitting the digging implement to be placed under the structure.
